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Chancellor: Gerald Emmett Cardinal Carter

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Editorial

The Catholic Church Extension Society of Canada was founded in 1908 to arouse interest in and support for Canada's Home Missions. Now, seventy-five years later, there are nearly 1500 missions across Canada.

And yet, when I came to Church Extension in 1979, I was surprised and — frankly — a bit disappointed to find out how little Canadians knew about the Society.

In order to make Extension better known and appreciated, we planned a number of projects to extend through this, our 75th anniversary year.

We began with a 19-month calendar covering June '82 through December '83. The calendar was well received and supported. We are especially grateful to the Catholic Newspapers, The Canadian League, Jesuit Missions and Oblate Missions magazines for allowing us the use of their mailing lists which helped us get extensive coverage within the Canadian Catholic community.

We are producing six quarterly magazines which started in September 1982. We have two more to publish.

We are producing four Supplements for the Catholic papers. This is our third. We are also changing our weekly column in the Catholic papers to a monthly tabloid size page.

The purpose of these publications is to make Canadian Catholics aware of the great number and variety of missions in Canada, Christian communities which need outside help if they are to survive and grow. In the current year we have pledged more than 1.5 million dollars to such communities.

Catholic people are generous in their support of the Church. We are sure that when the needs of our own missions are known, Canadian Catholics will respond. Extension can be their vehicle.

R. Carey

Msgr. Roy A. Carey

The frontispiece shows the northernmost chapel in Canada, at Nunasiag, Navy Board Inlet, latitude 73°22'N. Photo courtesy Fr. Guy Mary Rousseliere, Pond Inlet, N.W.T.

Thanks, Partners!

BY ANNETTE WESTLEY

It was the generosity of Church Extension donors that gave the founding fathers the confidence needed to launch the Society.

Going back 75 years, the first president, Msgr. Alfred E. Burke, went out to test the pulse of Catholics in Canada to find out their willingness to share.

When he returned from his 'begging' expedition with a donation of \$5,000, the men around the Board table were jubilant. With Toronto's Archbishop, Most Rev. F. P. McEvay, they shouted with joy, "We win, we win. Here's the money to prove that the laity is willing to support the new Society."

Today that rejoicing around the Board table is echoed across the nation by missionary bishops, priests, sisters and lay spiritual leaders as they expressed gratitude to the donors, better known as 'Partners of Home Missions'.

The missionaries, in their acknowledgements to Church Extension for financial support, also share that joy with the benefactors. For example, Father Robert LeMeur, OMI, in Tuktoyaktuk at Beaufort Sea, said that because of the help received he was able to train spiritual leaders. "They are doing a good job in conducting Bible sessions, teaching religion in the school and holding Sunday communion services in my absence. So all in all, the future looks bright and hopeful." (See the article on Father LeMeur on page 4.)

How far can \$4,000 be stretched in these inflationary times?

Here's what Father Jules St. Pierre in Prince Albert plans to do with his donation from Church Extension benefactors: cover travel expenses to serve four

missions; pay for repairs and maintenance to his three churches; buy catechism material and heating fuel.

The 80-year-old Oblate didn't mention food or other luxuries on his application form in requesting funds.

In northern Saskatchewan, Sister Viola Bens co-ordinates religious education in nine missions.

Sister Viola's request for \$18,190 to finance different programs has been granted by Church Extension for which Archbishop Paul Dumouchel, OMI, said in gratitude, "Sister Viola and her team are doing indispensable work..."

Another Sister, Evva Melanson at Longlac reserve in northern Ontario, requested \$16,000 which has been granted to conduct retreats, seminars and workshops. These sessions will help native people to gain spiritual knowledge by which they will become leaders in their communities.

Expressing gratitude for the benefactors' assistance, Bishop Roger Despatie of Hearst said, "Sister Evva and her community are a real model for all our parishes."

During the past 75 years, contributions from Church Extension Partners have increased to the point that enabled the Society to allocate close to \$1.5 million to Canada's Home Missions this year.

Bishop Hubert O'Connor, OMI, of Whitehorse diocese, summed up the gratitude of bishops and missionaries all across Canada to the 'Partners of Home Missions': "Please accept our sincere thanks for the very valuable assistance the benefactors of Church Extension have provided over the years. May they be assured of our continued prayers for their generosity in unselfishly sharing our ministry to build the Kingdom in this corner of the Lord's vineyard." □

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The Catholic Church
Extension Society
Of Canada



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Dear Msgr. Carey:

To Help Home Missions, I am pleased to enclose my gift for:

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The Martha, Mary, Joseph Ministries

Looking for volunteers for Via Veritas Vita Program

BY SISTER VIRGINIA NELSON C.S.J.

Today there is a strong re-awakening among native people of a desire to return to their roots and also to serve the God Whom they have always worshipped. When people on a reserve are waiting for welfare cheques they build up a negative attitude which paralyzes the social community.

They know that they must break out of this slowly but surely. Native people for thousands of years have had imprinted on their hearts, by the Father of all, the words of Matt. 25:35ff; "When I was hungry you gave me to eat, when I was thirsty you gave me to drink. . . ." God in His wisdom gave them this Indian-Christian insight that we did not receive until the time of Christ! They have always striven to help

their neighbour and not allow a person in their area to go hungry or without clothing.

God has always guided the Indian people down the years. He revealed Himself in their culture in many ways, always preparing them to meet His Son. They met God in their medicine lodge, in their sweet grass, in their peace pipe and always He made sacred for them the things of their culture so that they could be used when He came to them in Christianity.

One way we can help them is to call forth JOSEPHs and MARTHA/MARYs to go to walk with our native people. A JOSEPH is an apostolic

volunteer who wishes to give at least six months to serve in the Church of the North of Canada. He will live in Christian community, as we are mindful of the words of Dorothy Day:

We have all known the long loneliness and we have learned the only solution is love and that love comes with community.

He will carry out the Works of Mercy; he will participate in prayer meetings with his Indian brothers and sisters; he will help them in every way he can to bring forth their deepest God-given gifts. He will help them to face up to some of the evils of the system that make them dependent, fearful, and lacking in self-confidence. He will work with the teachers in the school, if requested, to make the religion lessons alive and vibrantly meaningful to the life that is lived on the reserve. He will be a person of deep prayer so that the Word of God is very often uppermost in his mind, and he will act out of that spiritual and mental milieu. But most of all he will strive to bring forth the spiritual leaders of the community, and will help them in any way he can, as he will be deeply imbued with the understanding that this is the most important thing he can do for the future of the native people of Canada.

The accompanying picture shows a JOSEPH who is giving one year of service to the Church at the Anishnabe Centre at Anderson Lake, Espanola, Ont. He has worked in many capacities at the Centre, under the direction of Fr. M. Murray, s.j., and his name is Herbert Heemskerck.

Herbert first came into contact with the Anishnabe Centre and the people who are working there to bring forth spiritual leadership in the Indian Church, when he was a leader of a high school team that worked there in the summer of 1981. His daughter, Anne, was on the team and he felt that he should give up his holidays to help out any way that he could. In addition to his work with the young children who came to the summer camp, he also helped in the building that was going on. His heart began to be caught up in the marvels that were happening, and he began to think about giving a long period of time to the work. In April, 1982 Herbert officially joined the team at the Anishnabe Centre and when his year ends he will be sad to leave there, I know. Last May I visited in time to see him putting in a large garden, and those who work with him say that everything he has done, has been done with largeness of heart. He may think that his contribution has been small but I believe that it has been vast. Pope John XXIII wrote:

. . . Jesus calls you to work with Him; to offer your abilities, your efforts, your intelligence, for the spread of His Kingdom . . . Jesus fed the multitudes with five loaves and two fishes and He knows how to use your contribution to the apostolate, small as it may be, to work wonders.

All that has been said above about a JOSEPH is applicable to a MARTHA/MARY. Women who are deeply spiritual, as also very practical in the carrying out of life's small details, are needed in the Home Missions. When I was a novice, my Mistress of Novices told us that we should all strive to have both "Martha" and "Mary" elements in our lives, if we truly desired to serve God. This scripturally-inspired example has always stayed with me and I feel that it has a strong application to the work to be done in the Church of the North.

The age may be between twenty-five and sixty-five, as long as the volunteer has a heart filled with love and with joy in the Lord. The volunteer will receive a small stipend, travel expenses and an insurance policy from the VIA, VERITAS, VITA PROGRAM. The missionary will provide the board and room. For further details please contact me at this address:

Sr. Virginia Nelson, c.s.j.
St. Joseph's Convent,
3377 Bayview Ave.,
WILLOWDALE, ONT. M2M 3S4
PHONE: (416) 222-1101



Herbert Heemskerck, an apostolic volunteer for one year at the Anishnabe Centre, Anderson Lake, Ontario. Photo by Jane Mundy, Toronto.

Breaking ice

A Profile of Father Robert LeMeur, OMI Missionary of the Western Arctic

BY FRED MILLER, OMI

Father Robert LeMeur opened his ritual, said a prayer, sprinkled holy water and gave the ship a name: his own! The Robert LeMeur, newest and most advanced icebreaker in the fleet of Dome Petroleum, had been duly and properly baptised.

He flew into Vancouver on August 27th, christened the ship, and on the 28th was winging his way back home to Tuktoyaktuk on the Arctic Ocean. The big city had no attraction for him.

Father LeMeur is the Pastor of a tongue-twisting Inuit village of 760 souls on the shores of the Beaufort Sea. How did he come to have this formidable vessel named after him?

That is the subject of this story.

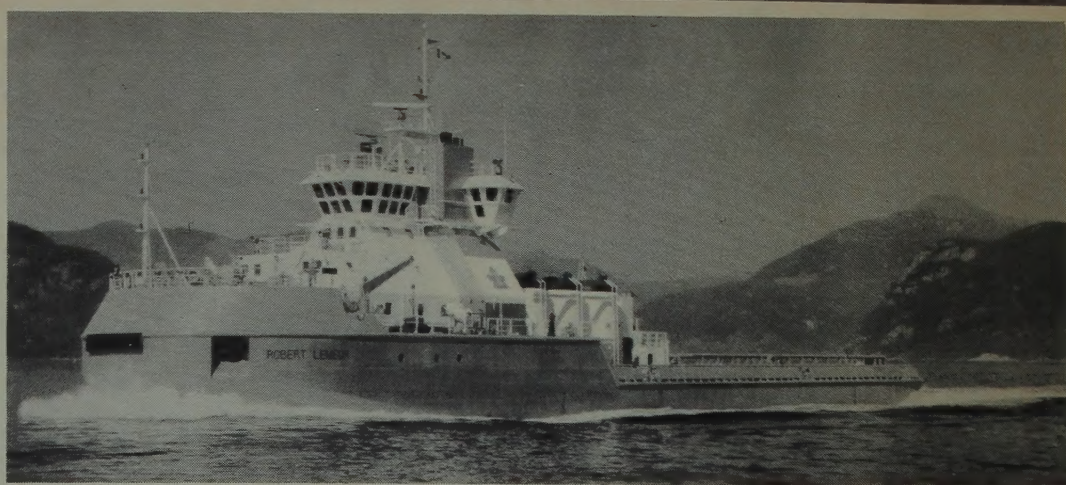
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On March 21st of this year, a day I will never forget, I made a trip very few Canadians have ever made. It was a trip of 130 kilometers on an ice road over the Arctic Ocean from Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk. My driver was Bobby Grubben who, with his wife Jean, were the first native Inuit people I had ever met. For me it was a journey into a world which had gripped my imagination from childhood. It was a journey to the end of the earth!

I had come to speak with a man who had crossed the ocean many years ago to become a Canadian and to become what we used to call an Eskimo, but now name in their own language an Inuit. His name is Father Robert LeMeur, Oblate missionary extraordinary.

He is a tough one. You can see it in the rock-like set of his jaw, the thin determined line of his lips, the incisive glance of his blue, Breton eyes coming at you from under the rocky protuberance of his overarching, unkempt brows.

And that nose, if I may risk saying it, could have been the model for the ship's prow! But his claim to



Dome Petroleum's most modern icebreaker, the Robert LeMeur, named after missionary priest from Brittany. Murray McLellan photograph.

the ship's name goes deeper than his craggy features.

At 62, Father LeMeur has already put the perils of 35 Arctic winters behind him. To use his own word, he has "survived". Survival is a word that comes often and significantly to his lips.

He could not be expected to know what survival entailed when he arrived there, a stranger, in 1946. Bishop Trocellier told him he was assigned to Paulatuk, nearly 600 kilometers east of the Mackenzie Delta.

What awaited him at Paulatuk was a relentless round of hunting, fishing, even digging coal in the summer. His tutor was Father Maurice Métayer. It was all they could do to keep up with the demands of survival.

Robert LeMeur was born into a pious and god-fearing family at St. Jean de Droigt in the Diocese of Quimper in Brittany in 1920. His home was near the rocky coastline and the sea which carried his imagination away beyond the horizon. He dreamed of China and a missionary vocation. Advised by his director of conscience, he entered the Oblate novitiate on the Island of Berder off the Breton coast in 1937.

But the clouds of war were gathering and his country was quickly overrun after the outbreak of hostilities. He was studying at LaBrosse Monceau, near Paris, the day the Nazis came, killing several of his classmates and professors. He and a few others escaped. In 1943, at the age of twenty-three, he was ordained and went immediately into hiding and into the underground resistance movement.

At war's end, a survivor, he found himself on the Grigon, a slow boat, not to China, but to Canada, destined for the Arctic missions of the west. It was

May, 1946, and the cargo ship which carried him and a number of American G.I.'s moved slowly and cautiously through waters still strewn with undetonated mines, the dangerous debris of a global war.

He crossed the continent from New York to Edmonton, to Fort MacMurray by train. From there, following the customary route of those days, he passed by a chain of lakes and rivers including the Athabaska and the Slave to Fort Smith where he boarded the Santa Anna to begin another journey of 2,300 kilometers to Great Slave Lake, down the mighty Mackenzie to the Arctic Ocean and to Paulatuk. It was a Homeric voyage on a vast scale to a new and harsher Eden, unmarred by Eastern and Western influence and unwarmed by the sun, to a people sealed by nature's deep freeze in a culture of the outer limits.

Through the rent made by the intrusion of Western man all the knowledge and wisdom of the world would pour in upon them. It would not be an un-mixed blessing. But what the priest brought was the pearl of great price. His greatest treasure and his single aspiration was to introduce the light of Christ into the darkness and to expand their world with the warmth of His love.

In the 35 years he has been on the coast Father LeMeur has seen vast changes. His career spans the years between the igloo and the sophisticated technology of artificial islands and year-round navigation. His arrival predates radio communication and regular air links by at least a decade.

When he arrived the people were nomadic, setting up shelter when and where convenient, using snow or skins, the only material available to them. They wandered like the animals, their migrations linked to the fortunes of the food chain. They spoke no language but their own. They knew no education but to the skills of the hunt, the making of clothing and the seeking of shelter.

Today the Inuit lives in a modern home of wood and other materials fabricated in the south. He has a phone on the wall, a television set in the living room and a radio beside his bed to wake him for the regular hours of work. He prepares his food on a formica counter top. His children are educated. Some have seen the outside world and a few have chosen to stay there.

Some things have not changed. As we drove around the village I could see the freshly skinned hides of caribou hanging on the walls of houses and sheds to dry. A polar bear skin was draped over the boom of the mission supply ship, Our Lady of Lourdes, now a monument mounted on blocks near the church. And in the summer, on the shoreline busy with the traffic of ocean going tugs, scows and drill ships, one can see the Inuit people busily occupied cutting up the carcasses of the beluga whale, a traditional delicacy. It is on the shoreline of Tuktoyaktuk that the stone age and the age of the fossil fuels meet and make common cause with nature.

Father LeMeur does not oppose the intrusion of the 20th century upon them, though he regrets that they are not able to command a better share of the wealth of their primordial waters. Still, he is happy that his people are working. There are jobs for all who want them.



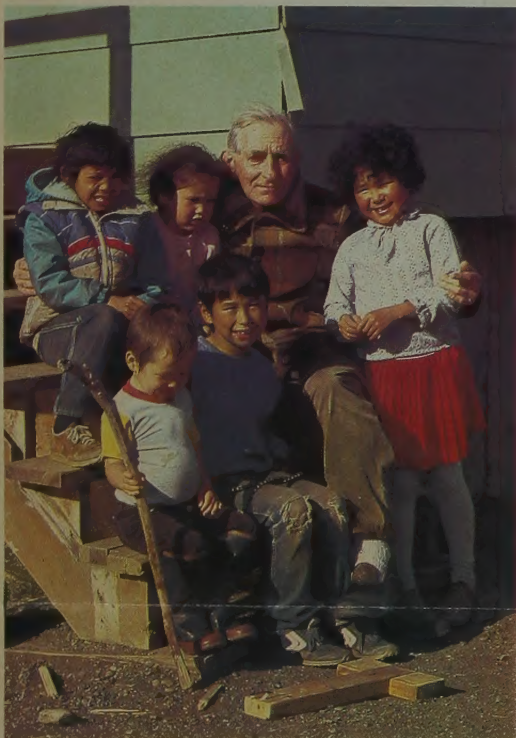
The real Father Robert LeMeur with the old mission supply ship, Our Lady of Lourdes, now a monument near the mission church at Tuktoyaktuk.

"We have been preparing them for a new life," he says, "because it is a necessity: no man is an island. They have to know what's going on," he insists. "We prepare them for the opening of the country because we know it is inevitable."

At the same time he is working to preserve and pass on elements of their ancient culture and traditions. In 1971, at the request of his people, he got into radio. Now, for six months of the year, he broadcasts a three-hour show, five days a week. He uses it to promote the folk memory of the people through stories which he has gathered over the years from the old people. It would do us no good to listen in. It is all put out in the language of the Inuit of the western Arctic.

The Oblates, he says, have learned the language, folklore and the legends of the whole north from the western Arctic to Greenland. "We are a link with the past," he declares, "the last link."

There is a very real danger that the past will soon



Father LeMeur passes on the Inuit traditions.

be lost to the Inuit. They were a proud people who were able to adapt to anything. They are the Inuvialuit, "the real ones", "the true people"! Any people who could live in the north with only animal fat for heat and a snow house for shelter, deserve the titles.

Today there are young Inuit of twenty years of age who have not even seen, much less lived in an igloo. The skills which once were the measure of a man are more and more neglected. The Inuit was very macho. He was a hunter and a fisherman, a master of the trackless wastes, or he was nothing!

Sitting in Father LeMeur's house I listened as he and Bobby Grubben, a native catechist, reminisced about the perils of travel on the tundra.

"I have seen them make a hole in an engine block when a spark plug blew out of an engine, plugging it with a piece of wood and making another hole so they could reach home. I want them to remember that", says Father LeMeur.

Bobby recalled the time he had to change a transmission on the treeless tundra at 40 degrees below zero. He chuckled, amused by the memory of the discomfort. "There was nothing else to do," he concluded, dismissing it with a shrug. One does what one has to do.

The resourcefulness and the simplicity of life of the Inuit people in the face of severe limitations and extreme conditions still draw deep admiration from Father LeMeur. He does not want the younger generation to lose those traits which make the people great.

When Father LeMeur came to the north he had to prove himself worthy of the select company of "the real people". He had to follow the people, hunting, fishing, visiting camps as they wandered over the

open country before they settled in villages.

The European missionaries, many of them farm boys from Brittany, accustomed to the sight and smell of cultivated fields, had to make an enormous change in lifestyle. Not the least difficult was the sheer emptiness of the new world.

"We lived very often for as much as two months absolutely alone," he said.

Father LeMeur remembers those early days with nostalgia. They were all young together, he and his fellow missionaries. They were tackling the ultimate, difficult task. They had to prove themselves against the country, its immense spaces; against the climate, its unforgiving harshness. They had to earn the respect of a people who did not understand why they had come, why they did not marry, why they remained.

"You have to show that you are absolutely without self interest and that you are here for them," declared Father LeMeur. "We had to prove ourselves to the Inuit in those early days."

And they obviously succeeded. They learned the language and became fluent in it. They became excellent hunters, fishermen and spiritual leaders.

In the ancient folklore and animistic religion of the Inuit, Father LeMeur found the transitional points to Christian beliefs and practices. It was a matter of seeing the similarities that were there and making the connections.

He told me to pick up a box where I sat at the kitchen table. Out of it I pulled what looked like a cookie or patty of some whitish substance. This, he explained, was akkutor. Among the Inuit it has a religious, almost a sacred character. It was made from the fat of an animal, whipped as we whip cream, to which a small amount of meat is added. Mostly fat, it is considered a great delicacy. The person to whom it is given enjoys a kind of divine protection. Nothing can harm him or her. Similarities with the Eucharist are readily apparent.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation had a precursor when in time of famine there was no caribou, seal, or fish and the people were starving. The shaman or medicine man, speaking out of the religious tradition of the tribe, demanded to know who had broken the taboos. Someone would confess to having trespassed on a sacred prohibition. In this he found a precedent and a predisposition for the Catholic Sacrament of Confession.

He found another parallel in traditions surrounding the giving of a name. It meant something, carried something of the essence of the person. For a child to receive the name of a really good man, a noted hunter for example, was a really great gift, an honour and a responsibility. It

challenged him to imitate the great man whose name he bore. In much the same way a Christian child is given the name of a saint and is reminded of the life, deeds and virtues of his namesake and is challenged by them to be the best he can be.

Father LeMeur could not have succeeded in his heroic undertaking if he had not been somewhat of a rugged individualist. Everything about his life of hardship in the north contributed to that and reinforced it. It must be hard for such a man to look toward the day of his own replacement. And even though that day may be a few years off, one has to begin to think of it.

He realizes that his days in the north are numbered. Younger men are needed. The children call the priests "tatak", "grandfather". "If you want someone here again you should bring them now," he says. But where to find the younger priests to replace the aging clergy, among whom he ranks as one of the younger ones? Who is willing to take on the isolation and the long loneliness?

One alternative that has been gaining acceptance among the Oblates is the idea of a team of priests living together for mutual support at some convenient location and working out from there with periodic visits to each mission station.

"We couldn't do it because of the distance," he says. "Transportation was by dog team and boat. Team work; it was not suitable."

Today, conditions of travel are different. Distances which might in those early years have taken days and weeks to traverse by dog team can now be spanned in hours and fractions of hours.

"Maybe we have to go to this," he concedes, "but it's not like somebody living among them. We had a vision of the mission fields. We stayed with the people and we wanted to stay with them. We didn't change. And the people know it. It's our country." There was a ring of pride and conviction in his voice as he spoke those words. And he added that, without working as a team and "without paternalism", they did what needed to be done.

There will not be the same need for the newcomers to prove themselves by the old standards. That groundwork has been done. They will have to find acceptance on other terms. But essentially, nothing can replace the dedication to the people, that selfless spirit that so characterized the early Oblate priests and won the love and respect of the people.

The new church in the north envisions a larger role for the laity. In this Father LeMeur is taking practical steps. He is preparing catechists like Jean and Bobby Grubben and Paul Voudrach who is both

(See *Breaking ice*, page 6)



Father LeMeur with catechists Bobby and Jean Grubben. The Oblates are a "link with the past" of the Inuit. Color photos by Barry Dursley, Imperial Oil.

Apostleship of the sea

Father Roland Joncas heads the Apostleship of the Sea, the Catholic chaplaincy service at the Port of Vancouver. While sharing in the work of the ecumenical Mission to Seamen, Father Joncas has enough to keep him busy looking after the Catholic seamen.

Despite the fact that the Polish fishing fleets ceased to use the Port of Vancouver during the year 1982, Father Joncas contacted over 9,000 Catholic seamen, and said Mass on ships 162 times.

The following excerpts from his annual report to Archbishop James Carney give a good picture of the work at the Port of Vancouver, to which the Catholic Church Extension Society is contributing \$11,000 this year:

"In the last year there has been a severe recession in shipping across the world and thousands of ships are tied up, especially European ships with expensive crews. There has been a shift to Third World ships and crews because they are cheaper. The number of Greek seamen coming to Vancouver has decreased drastically, and more and more ships are manned by Koreans. Fortunately we have a Korean Presbyterian minister, Rev. I. Shim Ro, on our team

of chaplains. He speaks both Korean and Japanese, and it is a great advantage to have him with us. The number of Filipino-manned ships is about the same, as also the number of Catholic Goans from India. Hardly any Irish ships come any more, and the number of ships from Central and South America and also Italy is down . . . ships where I found Catholic crews.

"The Port of Vancouver is fortunate in that we export commodities needed all over the world and its volume of business has kept up. If we had not had the 17-day longshoremen's strike, we would have broken the export mark of 50,000,000 tonnes (metric) for the first time in the history of the port. We were short only around ½ million tonnes.

"So my work continues to be very needed and very productive. In the last two years, 1981, 1982, over 10,000 people on the sea have received Rosaries from our apostolate. They have also received medals with the 'Cross' of St. Benedict on the back of them, which I consider the equivalent of wearing a small blessed crucifix with its power to protect. They have received over 13,000 pieces of literature on Fatima to encourage them to say the Rosary, along with prayers and diagrams on how to say it.

"I feel our work has been very productive and that Heaven will certainly smile on all those who have contributed to it. May Heaven's blessing continue to be with our work!" □



Father Roland Joncas in Vancouver.

Breaking ice

(Continued from page 5)

catechist and prayer leader. "They are eager. They want to know. They want to learn everything at once," he says. It is a beginning.

Father LeMeur represents the best kind of integration of the man of the south with the culture, climate and people of the north. He stands out, a truly larger than life figure in the living history of the transition from the stone age to the present, embodying all that is best in that breed that has shaped and been shaped by the people and the land. In helping to form the future he has been true to himself and his convictions. He has been true to the people.

When I heard that an icebreaker was to be named after him I wrote asking if this compromised his independence in any way.

He replied, "My hands and voice are free!" But it was not without some soul searching that he allowed his name to appear on a company vessel.

"As far as the icebreaker is concerned," he wrote, "I did refuse for personal reasons: too much honour." But his people asked him to reconsider. They insisted that it was an honour for "Tuk" and the western Arctic, not just himself.

"So I did accept," he said, "with a feeling of pride for the Arctic coast and for Tuk — also as a Canadian."

The ship, one of the best of its kind in the world, could be used to assert Canadian sovereignty, to protect the north against foreign intrusion, and could search and rescue as happened recently in the eastern Arctic when three Inuit stranded on an ice floe were rescued by an icebreaker.

"Now let's face it," he wrote, "I have been classified, identified as a radical non-conformist!" He sees himself as a kind of icebreaker, "opening minds, hearts and souls, breaking the ice of cold and giving a bit of warmth and humanity to all — joy and hope always!"

The Robert LeMeur he sees also as a kind of successor to Our Lady of Lourdes, the old mission supply ship. It now serves as a reminder of the early days, the summer mail delivery so eagerly awaited each year, the miraculous escapes from the menacing ice, and the defeats and disappointments too.

In naming an icebreaker after him Dome Petroleum would seem to be saying, "We admire this man and want to pay tribute to him for what he has done in the north. We would like to enjoy such a relationship of trust and confidence vis-a-vis the native people."

Anyone can see that he earned it. Dome will have to do the same. □

Journey to 'no priest land'

BY SISTER MARY MATTHEW, S.A.

Nakusp, B.C., population 1,478, in the heart of the Selkirk Mountains, has the dubious distinction of being the most isolated parish in the diocese of Nelson, being reachable only by ferry across the Arrow Lakes. It was certainly a shock to me when Bishop Emmett Doyle asked me to go there!

One has to sympathize with the problems of Bishop Doyle, whose diocese covers a large area of 'no priest land'. How hard it is for a Bishop to have people begging for a priest, and not have one to send.

Still, I had worked twelve happy years as Coordinator for Adult Religious Education in the Nelson Deanery. So, when the Bishop asked me to go to Nakusp as Pastoral Assistant at Our Lady of Lourdes parish, all I could ask was, "For how long?" "Twenty years," the Bishop answered. That was good for a laugh to counteract the shock!

Sister Susan Boyle, my Superior General (I belong to the Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement, Graymoor, Garrison, New York) left the final decision up to me.

As I prayed over my answer for the Bishop, a veteran African missionary said to me, "Go for the people, don't go for the place" (meaning the isolation). Ironically, I had recently given a vocation talk in which I had said, "Our work is with the poor," and "We prefer parishes where no one else will work." It seemed the Lord was making me eat my own words! I would have to leave my Community of Sisters, be without Mass for weeks; I knew that of

the six intrepid pastors assigned to Nakusp, four had to leave because of illness; how could I cope? Yet, I saw the great need to spread the Gospel and to be with and for the people in 'no priest land'. I chose to go to Nakusp.

Nakusp was originally an Indian trading post. White settlers came when silver, zinc and lead were discovered in 1890. Forestry is the major industry today. An 8,000-foot asphalt airstrip allows the lumber men to commute from the cities. The early missionaries covered all this territory on horseback.

My primary role at Our Lady of Lourdes parish is as a teacher, providing Religious Instruction on many levels. Three Journey I groups (Bible Study) are in progress in three towns. Needless to say, Journey here is "Journey with a difference!" Young parents must bring their tiny toddlers. This is very exciting for the children. They play at one end of the house while the adults study, pray and 'lively discuss' at the other!

Preparing candidates for Confirmation, pre-Baptism and pre-Marriage instructions, helping the catechists, and counselling are all part of the work.

The Bishop comes once a month to offer Mass at Nakusp and our four outlying missions: New Denver, Burton, Fauquier and Edgewood. The parishioners are active in their roles as Lectors, Eucharistic Ministers, Song Leaders, Visitors to the Sick and all the hundred and one activities that make up parochial life anywhere.

Our Lady of Lourdes, the first church in Nakusp, was built in 1905. It has seen continuous use ever since. My 'convent' is a three room rectory tacked onto the church. The ladies of the parish helped me to get the place ready. I left many friends behind but have found many wonderful new ones!

Life is a constant challenge! Oh, for the luxury of a washer and dryer! But — one DOES become ingenious! A board, an old blanket, a worn sheet and presto — an ironing board!

I was given a guest book. I was told I'd have so few guests that the ones who DID come should be remembered. Bishop Doyle was the first to write in it. I don't think he'll mind if I quote him. "Congratulations, Sister Mary Matthew, on the 'new look' of the rectory. May it be a sign of newness of faith and hope for the parishioners, as the Liturgy of Easter calls us to new life in the Risen Christ."

I pray that God will find in me a fit instrument to bring this faith and hope to His people in this part of 'no priest land'. And, as I am a Franciscan, may He also make me an instrument of His peace. (But — twenty years?!) □



Sister Mary Matthew with candidates for Confirmation.

Snapshots and Letters from Missions

Appreciation

It was with great joy and deep appreciation for many generous benefactors and yourself that we received the first allocation by means of cheque for our new venture of adding two Sisters of the Cross to our parish staff. There is already a great and beautiful radiation of God's special love for his people being sensed in our parishes.

In the six months that Sister Rachel and Sister Ellen have been with us, much has already been accomplished and parish efforts are blooming.

The first-ever School of Religion has been set up at St. Philip's Mission. This church is located 15 km north of Kamsack. It serves the needs of the white population of the area and particularly the two Reserves (Cote and Keesee Moose) which are basically Catholic-rooted. These natives are of the Saulteaux tribe.

Our Catechists, both Indian and white, were prepared and trained by the Sisters who continue to meet with individual teachers every few weeks in order to plan the nitty-gritty of lesson presentation . . .

We have prepared six couples as facilitators of pre-baptism instructions. In fact, this very week they will strike out on their own, with some coaching, as they make their first steps in this field.

On a weekly basis, a sizeable group of natives meet for prayer, sharing and friendship. It is so good to see grandmothers, fathers and mothers, youth



In Kamsack, Saskatchewan, not all is hard work for Father George and his friends.

and children join in a common purpose . . . and enjoy it.

April will see the opening of a "Help-Centre" for the youth of Indian Ancestry — simply to help them over the hurdles of blue or down days. This community has simply been devastated by many premature deaths among this group. Something had to be done. This centre will begin on a small scale obviously and will be staffed by local volunteers. Hopefully, it will develop into a group which embraces all the youth of the Reserves and we shall be able to move to other projects as well.

We have moved into the RCIA program too with Indian participation. Plans are being developed to bring this process to our youth next fall, where a year-long program of preparation will lead to the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation.

The latest development: for the first time an Indian was elected to St. Philip's Parish Council: a milestone in itself.

Later we wish to establish the Girl Guides and Brownies on the Reserves as Sister Rachel is fully qualified in this type of work too.

So we are moving, thanks to the Spirit of God and to generous-hearted people. We will certainly remember them in our prayers.

With a grateful, every-day, thank you,

In the Lord Jesus,
Father M. George
St. Stephen's Church,
Kamsack, Saskatchewan

News from Sioux Narrows

Thanks to your financial support through the Catholic Church Extension Society, we are able to carry on a great deal of mission work here at Sioux Narrows, Ontario, and on the Indian reserves of Sabaskong and White Fish Bay.

In Sioux Narrows itself, there are catechism classes for the school children, and also the Journey I Scripture program, which takes place once a week.

But the bulk of our work is on the reserves, where we teach catechism to grades one through eight after school hours, and spend evenings ministering to adults in various ways. Through evenings of prayer, liturgical celebrations, Scripture, song, and instructive discussion we hope to develop Catholic Christian leadership on each reserve.

At present we have no church facility on either reserve. We use classrooms or a day care centre. Our



Baptism Mass on reserve.

hope is that one day a place of worship will become a reality on each reserve.

We also do a great deal of pastoral visitation on each reserve, touching individuals who are for various reasons in need of God's love and healing. While on these visits, we prepare couples for the Baptism of their children. As we prepare the older children for the reception of the sacraments of initiation, we can also work with their parents, stressing and encouraging parental responsibility.

All this demands a great deal of travelling, and at the price of gas, we could not do it without your financial support.

We have been gifted in the person of Bernadette Cey, a lay woman from Saskatoon, who has responded to the call she deeply felt to serve in the native mission field of Canada. She is very gifted in music, both vocally and on the guitar. Coupled with her deep spirituality and teaching ability, her gifts are an asset to our missionary work. Presently, Bernadette shares community life with us and is employed by Bishop O'Mara of Thunder Bay.

We are very indebted to all our benefactors in Catholic Church Extension, and we keep them in our prayers, asking our dear Lord to bless them all with his choicest blessings, and reward them a hundred-fold.

Sister Patricia Laliberte, s.j.s.h.
Sioux Narrows, Ontario.

A plea from Labrador

On many occasions we like to tell you how much we appreciate the help that you have given and the interest shown in our missions. However, it is on these occasions that we find that we are always asking for more. How dare we?

Our children grow so fast that it seems that they are only in the clothes that you send for 24 hours. In times of intense cold outdoor clothes are worn indoors.



Sister Martha (left) and friend during the milder season.

We wish to thank those of you who have been sending clothes to us over the years. Thanks to the consistent help of the C.W.L. of Labrador City, other benefactors and the I.O.D.E., many hardships have been alleviated for parents. Clothing is very expensive in the local store and many parents cannot afford to clothe their families.

The Mission 'clothing bank' is a great help. In order to avoid abuse the clothing is priced (minimal). Ten native people sort out and price the items and then sell them once a week. They do earn a little extra for their families during these hours.

In their sorting, there are certain items which are of little use in our environment: nylons, white clothes, sleeveless dresses, long ladies' coats, evening gowns, skirts if they are smaller than size 18. Men's suits are not used due to the climate. The men are in skidoo pants, overalls, or thick winter pants.

Items of great value: parkas, flannel shirts, cotton underwear or wool or acrylic, boots, socks, winter jackets, sweaters. All children's clothes are welcome with the exception of girls' dresses. BOOTS are always needed. Some of our children go through as many as 3 pairs of boots a winter. There is no skating rink so they skate on their boots. Each community has 50 per cent of its population under the age of 16.

Formerly, 'Comat' provided free transportation to Goose Bay for your articles. We now have to rely on mail parcels. So in the interest of economics if any organization, C.W.L., I.O.D.E., parishes, or individuals want to help us perhaps they could limit their donations to the 'items of great value.'

May the Lord bless your generosity,

Sister Martha Groffen, S.F.B.
R.C. Mission
Davis Inlet
Labrador
AOP 1A0



Children at First Communion at Dettah Mission in Mackenzie diocese, N.W.T.

Inuit in Arctic seek balance in changing world

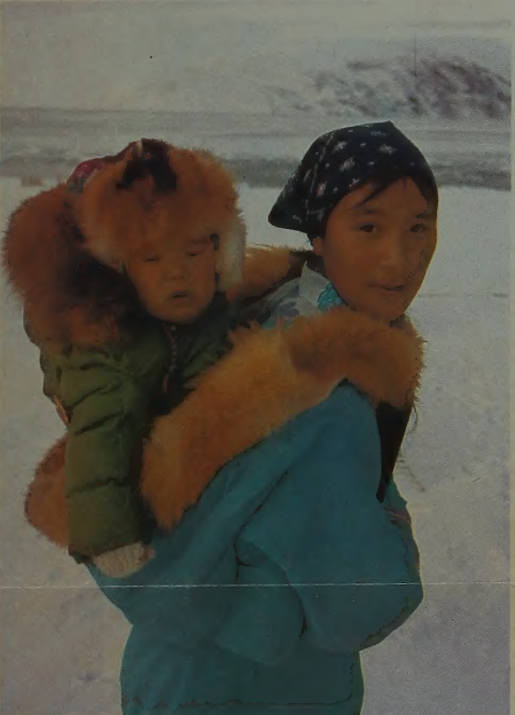
BY JULES DION, OMI

Kangirsujuq, formerly named Wakeham Bay and later Maricourt, is located in Northern Quebec, on the south side of Hudson's Strait in the Arctic.

The Inuit living in this part of the Arctic were originally nomadic people, living on hunting and fishing. When the Federal Government established schools, the Inuit people gathered in villages. Kangirsujuq's population was then around 250. In the 50's, the closest mission, Koartak, became an outpost of Kangirsujuq, and the mission church of Koartak closed.

In 1965, a mining camp with 350 workers was built at Raglan Lake, 40 miles west of Kangirsujuq. This 200-mile mission-land comprises two Inuit villages and a mining camp. That's it!

In 1962, when the Federal Government built



Inuit mother and child in the vast spaces at Kangirsujuq.

schools, the Inuit people experienced a complete turnover. For centuries, they had lived in this country untouched by civilization; in the course of 20 years signs of progress appeared rapidly: permanent housing, electricity, heating systems, co-operatives, communications by radio, plane, telephone and finally television.

In 1975, "The James Bay Agreement" was signed between governments and the native people of Nouveau-Quebec. "The Inuit and James Bay Development Society" settled the land question by allocating 250 square miles of land for each village. Corporations, with legal status, were formed as were municipalities, a regional government, social affairs and health agencies, various committees, an Inuit police force, land development committees, and School Boards, Federal and Provincial.

Facing such great changes in so short a time, the Inuit people are now searching for a new balance. Culture and language are in danger of disappearing; the multiplicity of Committees and Boards (too many for such a small population) are functioning under government rules and supervised and censored by government. Civilization and bureaucracy moved in, and with them, delinquency, drinking and drugs. Various religious sects moved in and are underhandedly shaking up the religious beliefs of the Christian Communities.

The Inuit are dealing with all these changes by exercising leadership in their mission church. Gone

are the days when the missionary did everything on his own.

One young man is very much involved in the preparation of celebrations, reading, distribution of communion at church, and bringing communion to the sick. Some of the ladies teach religion to the young children. And a very active group of women, who like to call themselves Catholic Women's League, hold bazaars, help families in need, and even sponsor children of under-developed countries. Part of the small funds they raise are sent every year to a Third World Country. They have also been very successful in stopping objectionable movies being shown, and in curbing pornographic and immoral literature. The Parish Council is also taking care of church finances and liturgy.

What has been done in this part of the Arctic for the Kingdom of God has been made possible in great part because of the help received from Catholic Church Extension Society. First of all, your prayer: "May Your Kingdom Come" and your donations received through Catholic Church Extension Society prove that you did not forget the Lord's words: "What you did to the least of my brethren, you did it for me." Without your help we would be unable to keep on going. For us, the only way to thank you is to pray for you, and this is what we do. Be assured that you work for the coming of the Kingdom in this isolated part of Canada. May the Lord bless you and give you peace and joy. □

The Inuit Villages in Nouveau-Quebec

NAME	MEANING	POPULATION
Kuujuarapik	Beautiful big river (Great Whale)	645
Inukjuak	Giant	632
Povungnituk	Where there's a smell of bad meat	741
Akulivik	Point of land	241
Ivujivik	Where the currents are strong	185
Salluit	Where the mountains are thin (Sugeub)	478
Kangirsujuq	Big bay (Wakeham Bay)	275
Quaqtaq	Tapeworms	164
Kangirsuk	Bay	284
Aupaluk	Red place	50
Tasiujaq	Like a lake	100
Kuujjuq	Big river (F Chimo)	891
Kangiqsualujjuq	Very big bay	323

Extension Society Financial Statement

1 MARCH 1982 TO
28 FEBRUARY 1983

NAME OF DIOCESE	GRANTS	RECEIVED FROM	EDUCATION OF PRIESTS	NAME OF DIOCESE	GRANTS	RECEIVED FROM	EDUCATION OF PRIESTS
Amos	\$ 3,256.00	\$	\$	Prince George	90,500.00		9,049.00
Calgary	6,164.95	15,000.00	10,000.00	Regina	71,595.00		
Churchill (Manitoba)	200.00			Regional*	108,409.87		
Edmonton	1,000.00			Rouyn-Noranda	1,000.00		
Grand Falls	117,500.00			St. Boniface	91,800.00	21,000.00	
Gravelbourg	3,000.00	3,092.05		St. Catharines		11,408.42	
Grouard-McLennan	40,235.00	2,369.53		St. George	56,750.00		
Halifax	3,000.00			St. Paul's	76,555.00		
Hamilton		18,000.00		Eparchy of Saskatchewan	12,500.00		
Hauterive	15,500.00			Sault Ste. Marie	33,123.46	21,323.46	
Hearst	25,745.00			Saskatoon		3,288.50	
Kamloops	89,613.50	5,133.51		Eparchy of Toronto	2,000.00		
Keewatin	117,440.00			Thunder Bay	64,250.00	11,994.00	
Kingston		10,204.46		Timmins	5,000.00	500.00	
Labrador	58,338.00			Toronto		64,364.77	
London		14,813.25		Trois-Rivieres	25,000.00		
MacKenzie	51,469.50			Vancouver	26,254.00	19,667.44	
Moosonee	73,968.30		5,000.00	Victoria	85,250.00	9,955.00	15,000.00
Nelson	156,780.00	8,000.00	11,000.00	Whitehorse	50,700.00		10,000.00
Eparchy of New Westminster	32,440.00	630.00		Winnipeg	109,240.00		
Pembroke		1,800.00		Archeparchy of Winnipeg	5,000.00		
Prince Albert	49,645.00	4,822.48					
				TOTAL	\$1,760,222.58	\$247,366.87	\$60,049.00

Direct grants, as listed, were given to 35 dioceses. In addition to these direct grants, 6 dioceses received grants total \$60,049 from our bursary fund for the education of priests.

* The Regional grants are for projects that benefit more than one diocese, e.g. Algonquin Pastoral Council, The Daly Centre, The Way, Anishnabe Spiritual

Centre, Kisemanito Centre, Western Catholic Bible School.

Twenty dioceses in Canada took up a collection for the Home Missions to be allocated through Church Extension, for a total of \$247,366.87.

We have outstanding loans of \$1,435,711.94 at 3% in seventeen different dioceses.